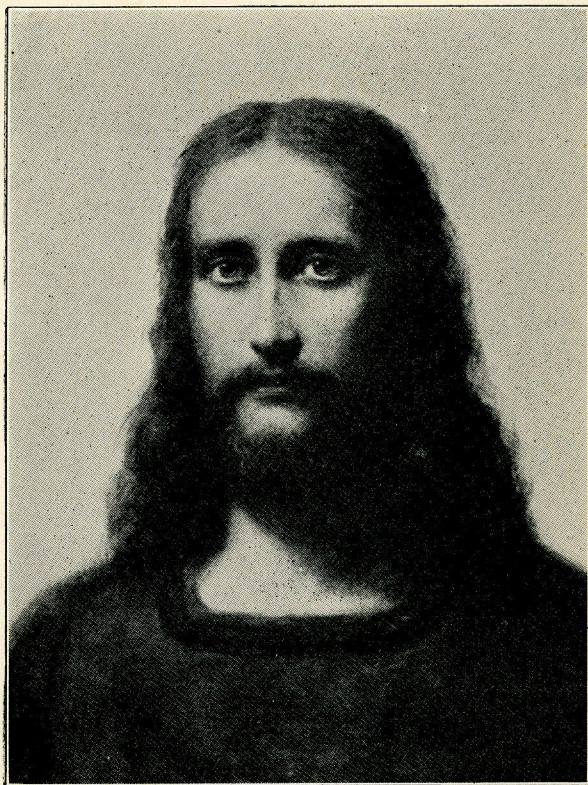


CHRISTMAS
AND THE
CHRIST



By L. G. WEATHERHEAD



THE IDEAL HEAD

An artist's conception of the Christ

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CHRISTMAS AND THE CHRIST

Why do we have this festival, and when was it instituted? What is its meaning? Christmas has many meanings, as it speaks to the hearts of different people. No two people interpret things in the same manner.

If you were to interrogate the members of any church as to the underlying meaning of a lecture or sermon given from the pulpit that day, you would be surprised to find that many of them have not in the least grasped the idea that the preacher intended to convey. He preaches according to the preconceived idea of things that he has in his mind; they listen also with preconceived ideas that they have in their minds, and so interpret all he says according to their own notions, and he would indeed be surprised were he to hear his sermon talked over by members of his congregation. It is the same with the interpretation of Christmas. Some look on it as the season especially for children, because Christ was born into the world as a little babe, innocent, without any knowledge of sin, to be a joy to his parents; and most people feel that

in giving joy to their little ones at this time they are fulfilling the Christ law of Love.

Others look at it just as a season of good cheer; a season when they receive letters and presents from all their friends, a season when they know that for a few moments, perhaps the only ones in the year, they are remembered. The sacred reason is very little in their minds; it is to them just an old story, and they live in the present. But even putting it at that, it serves to bring people together in unity of thought and harmony that one day in the year.

There is another class who unfortunately look on it as a time especially devoted to eating and drinking. But we must remember that we are all at different stages, and in past times the satisfaction of the physical desire for tasty food was all a part of our evolution; and so we must look at it as a passing stage which we all go through.

There are many others who feel the deep significance of Christmas, whose hearts beat with joy at the thought that as Christ was born many years ago at that season, lived and died that all might be helped, they, too, dedicate themselves anew to His service, voluntarily sacrificing their desires and wishes, so as to nurture the infant Babe in their hearts, in order that

they too may attain perfection, and become that which is their ideal.

Let us return to our first question—why do we keep this festival and when was it first instituted?

We keep that special day at 25th of December as a festival because we have been told that on that day Jesus was born of Mary in the City of Bethlehem. That is the accepted date given by the churches and adhered to by the mass of Christians. As a matter of fact, there is no record whatever in any manuscript or book of the birth of Jesus at that time.

If we look into the matter we find that there have been no less than 136 different dates fixed on by different Christian sects. I need not quote them, but suffice it to say that some were in June, February, July, August and September; but S. Chrysostrum, writing in the year 390, says: "On this day, the 25th of December, the birth of Christ was lately fixed at Rome, in order that, while the heathen were busy with their ceremonies, the Christians might perform their rites undisturbed." So you see that there is no pretense whatsoever of its being the anniversary of the birth of Christ except to all outward appearance, for convenience only.

But there is a much deeper meaning to this

particular time being chosen; why even the pagans held their feasts at this one time. It is because the Sun which has always typified God, once again turns his face northward and is, so to say, born on that day—once again his yearly journey is begun. At or about Easter time he crosses the line, or is crucified, so to speak, and, then rising high in the heavens, typifying the Resurrection, sheds his life-giving power on the earth. This is called the Solar myth—hence the origin of Christmas day, observed by all nations before Christ, as well as by His followers. If you turn to the orthodox Christian belief, you are told that Christ was the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, who incarnated in a human body, was baptized, transfigured, died on the Cross and rose again.

Was He the only Christ Who has lived and suffered and died? We know that He was not. Are we to believe that all those years before His advent God did not send Saviors to help His people? Who then were Krishma, Hermes, Vyasa, Zoroaster, Buddha? Did they not perform the same office that our Christ has done for us? How it is then that all these great World-Teachers have invariably been connected with the Virgin birth and have wrought out the same trials and mysteries in their lives?

With patience, and by going back to the

beginning of the created Universe, we may perhaps see a little light in the darkness, even in this brief lecture. Before we proceed with this, it would be better to state that all the foregoing is not intended in any way to throw doubt on the existence of Jesus. He most undoubtedly did live though no account of the date of his birth has ever been found. Even Cannon Farrar, the old dean of Westminster, writes that all attempts to discover the month and day of the Nativity are useless. No data whatever exists to enable us to determine them with even approximate accuracy. According to the testimony of occultism, Jesus was born of Jewish parents, 105 years previous to the birth date fixed later. After his visit to the Temple at Jerusalem, the account of which we read in the Bible, or rather New Testament; he was sent to be trained in an Essene monastery near Mount Serbal, where there was a magnificent library of occult works. From there he went to Egypt, and having been fully instructed in the sacred teachings by the Essenes, he was initiated in Egypt, as a disciple of that Great White Lodge from which every great religion has its Founder.

As a young man he was noted for his purity of life, devotion and wisdom. His words were ever sweet and loving, winning over the harshest natures. Thus he lived to the age of 29 years.

The time was ripe then, as it is now, when all the world is at war, no one seeming wise enough to guide this chaotic condition into peaceful waters; the time was ripe, as I say, for one of those Divine Manifestations, one of those great World-Teachers, who come at these times of struggle to straighten out the affairs of the world by pouring anew wisdom into the hearts of men. It was the time when Rome was falling from her great height, and the world sceptre of empire was to be held by Teutonic hands, and as has always been the case when a new race was to lead the world, there was a World-Teacher given as a Guide and Instructor of its early footsteps.

And so it came to pass that the Christ took for His own use the body of this perfect man Jesus, and dwelt in it for three years. If you read the accounts in the gospels you will see that nothing is told of the life of Jesus from the time of the scene in the Temple until his baptism. Now that baptism marked the epoch when Christ took possession of Jesus' body, and is acknowledged by the Voice—"This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him:"—and from that time forward Jesus began to preach; from that moment He may rightly be called The Christ, for Christhood, as most students of Theosophy know, is

really an office, and that office is the Master of Masters. One who has passed through all the great Initiations and only returns to earth to help His younger brethren.

He taught His disciples, taught the people and poured out love on the suffering, the weary and the oppressed, and the tender magic of His gentle wisdom purified, enobled and sweetened the lives that came in contact with Him. Every little child loved Him. Have you ever thought, any of you, what it would be to have Christ among us again, to be able to listen to His voice, to watch the Divine love glowing out of His expressive eyes, to be able to grasp His hand in love, pouring out our lives to Him in willing obedience, bringing our children to listen to His words? No need for them then to echo the words of that old hymn "I wish that His hands had been placed on my head, that His arms had been thrown around me, and that I might have seen His kind look when He said: 'Let the little ones come unto me.'" Could you not also echo in your hearts that last verse: "Yet thousands and thousands are wandering still, never heard of that heavenly home; I should like them to know there is room for them all, and that Jesus has bid them to come."

Although Jesus taught all classes of men, yet we must believe that there were those who

were His chosen disciples, some of them following the occupation of fishermen. That does not imply that they were ignorant, on the contrary, they must have been men deeply versed in occult knowledge, or Christ would not have chosen them to receive special teachings. I think that circumstance alone should make us very wary as to how we judge people from outside appearance. It is not riches that make the saint, nor even intellect only; it is the pure in heart who shall see God.

This is one account of the life of Jesus; but there are others, from other sources, and they are very worthy of your consideration. If Jesus was not in his own native country from the age of 13 to 29 or 30, that will account for his not being mentioned by any of the great historians of the time, who chronicled the lives and events of that country. As we know well in our day, any gifted person who passes three years teaching in any place, has his followers and is appreciated by them, but to the people at large he is practically unknown; and so passes as a nine days wonder, except to those intimate few who very quietly talk about his teachings until they have interested so many in them, that long after his death, people begin to realize the truth of them, and then only begin to write of him; but not in the form of a very

connected history as those who really knew him are long since dead. The people who would be the most likely to chronicle the doings and sayings of Jesus are those who absolutely knew that he was a great teacher, and that what he said should be carefully preserved. You will naturally ask—why should these records have been kept secret? For these reasons: Recognizing their value as rules of life to be given out to the multitude, they were as much taken care of as we take care of the most expensive books in our library, viz: The Secret Doctrine. These wonderful teachings are like reference books, to be looked into and studied by those who know, or to be passed on to others. But the main reason was that the invaders of the countries where the manuscripts were kept burned them by hundreds and thousands wherever they could lay hands on them, and if they spared them it was simply with a view to belittle and deride them. It is and always has been the action of the upholders of the different faiths, to think that theirs is the only true one and that all others are not worth looking into. In Thibet, years ago one of the rulers tried to abolish Buddhism, and commanded all temples and monasteries to be demolished, the images to be destroyed and the sacred books burnt. Later the Mohammedans did the same thing, as

did the Spaniards in Peru and Mexico. Little wonder is it then that those who knew of these records should hide them away and not allow foreigners to see them, in case they too should share the same fate. With this in our minds I will read you the Buddhist account of Jesus during these years, and still another which, though differing in some details, is on the whole so similar that it seems only feasible to believe in the probability of its truth.

The first account is taken from the memoirs in the archives of Lhassa, of which there are copies and translations in many great monasteries. The translation in question was obtained by Nicholas Notovitch about 1887 from the Himis monastery in Ladak, 11,000 feet above the sea. It says that Jesus went to India with a caravan of merchants, for be it remembered that trading between India and all places farther west is a matter of history. If we only read the Bible, we can find that out for ourselves. They went first to Sindh, then to Jagganath, here he was called the Prophet Issa. He was taught by the priests to read and understand the Vedas, to cure by prayer, to teach and explain the Scriptures to the people, to drive out evil spirits, etc. He was six years in Jagganath, going on to Rajagriha, Benares and other cities.

He taught that the lowly had as much right

to know the Scriptures as the Brahmins or teachers, and because of this he incurred the anger of the Brahmins, and as they sought to kill him, he left secretly and went to the monastery where the great Buddha Sakya Muni had been born. Here he learned the Pali languages and studied the Sutras or Scriptures for six years. Leaving Nepal, he commenced his journey westwards. He passed through Persia teaching the people not to pray to idols but to the One Eternal God. Here he was brought before the council to explain his teachings. Conscience stricken the leaders would like to have done away with him, but they dared not, so let him go. Finally, at the age of 29 he arrived in the land of Israel.

The second account is that he went with Ravana, a devout Oriental Prince, who had seen and heard him in Nazareth, who took him to Jagganath, where he was received by the Brahmin priests in the temple there. Here he made a great friend of one of the priests, Lamaas Bramas, and they wandered together through all the regions of Orissa and the valley of the Ganges. Here Jesus learned the art of healing from Udraka, the greatest of Hindu healers. In this account Jesus is said to have stayed four years in the temple of Jagganath. During all this time he taught men wherever

he went, always showing how the Divine was in every one, and as we read in the Bible, so in these other accounts, he was more a friend to those of low estate than to the rich, indeed he seemed to seek out the poor and oppressed all the time. Benares was one of the cities in which Jesus taught, possibly that is the reason that a portrait of Jesus has been published which was supposed to have come from Benares.

Gradually the priests and rulers began to be afraid of him as he was so pure and truthful, putting them frequently to shame, and as is often the case this engendered jealousy, and jealousy leads to crime; so they sought to kill him. Jesus being secretly warned by his friend Lamaas, left Benares and journeyed until he came to Kapilavastu in the Himalayas, there the priests of Buddha opened wide their temple doors to him.

Next we read of him in Lhasa in Thibet, having crossed the Emodus Heights accompanied by a trusty guide. Here he saw Mengste, the greatest sage of the Far East, and Mengste welcomed him and allowed him to read the sacred manuscripts. But Jesus did not teach in Lhasa, he only studied in the temples and schools, and when he had finished he made his way west, stopping on the way at Ladak monastery near the city of Leh, where also he was received with great favor by the monks. He taught there for

some time, mostly in parables; there some merchants who had seen his mighty works among the people, gave him a well saddled and equipped mount and Jesus journeyed with their caravan to Lahore, where he again taught the multitudes, healed the sick, and showed the poor how to rise to better things by means of helpfulness. Here is a quotation from some of his teachings: "If you would live the perfect life, give forth your life in service for your kind, and for the forms of life, that men esteem the lower forms of life." Bidding farewell to them at Lahore, he took his camel and wended his way toward Sindh. Jesus was twenty-four years of age when he entered Persia on his homeward way; as usual he taught as he passed through the towns, but the priests and the ruling class did not welcome him because he censured them for cruelty to those of low estate; but the common people followed him in throngs. In time he reached Persepolis the city wherein the kings of Persia were entombed. After abiding there for some time till he felt that his work was finished there, he resumed his journey toward his native land. The Persian sage Kaspar went with him as far as the Euphrates, and then with a pledge that they should meet again in Egypt, the Master said farewell.

Jesus went on to Chaldea, passing through Ur,

the birthplace of Abraham. Again he met a sage called Ashbina, who told the people that a prophet of the living God had come to be with them, and together they went through the towns of Chaldea. They visited the ruined Babylon, treading the streets where the Isralites had been held captives. Finally crossing the Jordan he returned to Nazareth but not to remain; for shortly afterwards he visited Greece and was welcomed by the Ahtenians. Here he met Apollo and addressed the Grecian masters in the amphitheatre.

From Greece he sailed to Egypt, visiting Zoan where he stayed many days and Heliopolis, the city of the sun, and here he sought admission into the sacred brotherhood, and passing through all of the tests required of him he was received as the future Christ. All the sages of the earth, numbering seven, and among them Kaspar, were assembled at Alexandria when Jesus was there, and having remained with them for some time, he finally returned to Galilee to begin his mission in his own beloved country.

These accounts, then, give us some idea of how Jesus passed the intervening years between thirteen and thirty. If he had remained with his parents there surely would have been some one who would have written of his sayings and doings and as no accounts of these have ever

been forthcoming it seems feasible that these Buddhist documents may fill in the gap.

Now let us trace the birth of the Christ of the Ages. We are told that in most of the legends of the World-Teachers, they have been born of Virgin mothers. To understand how this myth has been coupled with the names of all of these, we must glance back to the formation of the solar system. The name Mary is of very ancient origin, and signifies Mare, the Sea—the waters of space. Now the waters of space typify the matter of space, that matter which formed our solar system was separated off from the infinite ocean of matter which fills space, and the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, called by orthodox Christians, the Holy Ghost, poured His Life into this matter to vivify it that it might presently take form, which form is given it by the Life of the Second Logos or Second Person of the Trinity, who sacrifices Himself by putting on the limitations of matter. We read in the Bible that the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Can you not understand then, that when this teaching had been handed down through all the ages, it so permeated men's minds that when a Christ was to be born anew, the reflection of what had happened in the past was thrown

down on that which was happening in the present. Schure puts it in this way: "The influence of the spiritual world which cooperates in the birth of any man whoever he be, is more powerful and evident at the birth of all men of genius." This influence reaches its greatest intensity in the case of one of those Divine Prophets destined to change the face of the world. The soul, ready for its divine mission, comes from a divine world, it comes freely and consciously, but that it may enter upon an earthly life a chosen vessel is needed, and the appeal of a highly gifted mother, who by the attitude of her moral being, the desire of her soul, and the purity of her life, has a presentiment, attracts and incarnates into her very blood and flesh the soul of the Redeemer destined in the eyes of men to become a son of God. Such is the profound truth beneath the ancient idea of the Virgin Mother. I think too, in regard to this, that the conditions of bringing a child into the world, are the conditions of the Universal Law of Nature, which is God's Law, and a law is a law and cannot be contravened.

Were God Himself, speaking of that Mighty Being even in the sense of a personified God, as many still think of Him, were He Himself to break one of His own Laws, then would it no longer be a Law, and it could not be relied

on. His Laws are immutable. I think if one were to meditate on this subject, and allow not only reason but intuition to be brought to play on it, it certainly would be straightened a little in men's minds; and looking at it from that standpoint, it should not in the least matter to us whether Jesus was born at one date or another, whether he was crucified, as given out in gospels, or stoned to death as is contended by some, for neither the Christian Creed nor the Gospels were originally intended to relate the life story only, of the Great Teacher Christ. They were different accounts of three very different things. First, an account of the Solar Myth. Second, an account of the initiations which every disciple has to go through. And third, a tradition merely of the life of Jesus. The amalgamation of these three things into one whole has caused this terrible confusion in the minds of men; and that is the reason why it is so difficult for the ordinary Christian minister to explain the gospels and the hidden truths in the scriptures. The Church has forgotten the Mysteries, which formed part of every great religion, and so also formed part of Christianity. She has forgotten the great truths of initiation. She preaches at one and the same time, these things: If you look in the epistle of St. James and the second chapter, you will find several

verses on faith and works—"What does it profit my brethren, though a man say he have faith, and have not works, can faith save him? Even so, faith if it hath not works is dead." Also, "By works was faith made perfect." And in the Acts of the Apostles, when the keeper of the prison asked Paul: "What shall I do to be saved?" Paul answered: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Invariably you are told you have *only* to believe and you will be saved. That is the mistake of taking the words of the Bible literally, instead of reading into them their true meaning. True belief is shown in works, for then only can it be called true, and so the church setting works aside, which are part of these initiations, preaches belief, pure and simple.

The many Christian sects look on the Cross, only as the instrument of the death of Jesus; but the Cross has a much wider significance and was used as a symbol in every ancient religion. Let us turn, once again to the formation of the Solar System. In some of the oldest books that have been carefully preserved from destruction, we find that the symbol of the Logos or God is a circle with a point in the center. This point widens out each side into a line, showing the dual nature of the Logos, Father and Son; and again this line is crossed

by another, signifying the Third Aspect, the Holy Ghost or Life Giver, so that the Cross in its original form has nothing to do with our Christ. In Theosophy we teach that the Cross in a circle signifies the Third Aspect of the Logos, but when the Third Logos descends into matter, the Cross is represented without the circle; and, still a little later, when the life is being poured into matter, and the creative activity of the Logos is working in matter, then this is represented by lines at right angles to the arms of the Cross and so we get another ancient symbol, the Svas-tika, whose whirling arms denote ceaseless activity. So the equal four-armed Cross, from the earliest times, has been the symbol of matter, or the crucifixion of the Third Logos, when He limited Himself by putting on the garment of matter.

So far we have been speaking of the equal-armed Greek Cross. We will now speak of the Latin Cross, which is the symbol of the Second Logos or Second Person of the Trinity. This Cross we name the Crucifix, and the first form in which we find it in the earliest ages is that of a Divine Man with outstretched arms, and later on, the Man bound to the Cross.

Now, as we have said, the Third Logos prepared the matter for the descent of the Second Logos. The Kosmic or Mystic Christ, who en-

tered the womb of virgin matter, as yet unproductive; The Holy Spirit having poured His Life into it and prepared it as a vehicle for Him who was to give it form, or to say incarnate in it. In the early stages of this descent the process was so slow that it was truly like an infant groping in the dark, and matter for a long time takes, or appears to take, mastery over spirit; but, by very slow degrees, moving through all the kingdoms of nature, he shapes it till it is able to take human form, and then by means of the evolution of men does He again stretch Himself on the Cross of matter, for are we not verily part of His Being, and are we not daily crucifying Him afresh in every wrong thought, desire or action, are we not delaying the return of Himself? This has been represented as the Cross on the Universe—thought of in form as the Heavenly Man, or Divine part of us standing in space, with arms outstretched as in blessing. This burial in matter typifies His death, carried out again in the life of Christ symbolically, as dying on the Cross. So the crucifixion of The Christ or Second Aspect of the Logos is part of the Kosmic Sacrifice and the representation of this as an allegory in the Mysteries and the sacred symbol of the crucified man in space became materialized into an actual death by crucifixion, and a crucifix

bearing a dying form. And so men have lost the true signification of all this, have bound it up with the life of Jesus, and made it the mere life story of Him who was called the Christ. In the life of everyone who determines to enter the Path by means of the Great Initiation this symbolism is always worked out.

Eventually we, every one of us, will go through the same things. For instance, when the pupil was ready for his initiation, he was voluntarily bound upon a wooden cross which was hollowed so as to support and receive the human form; he then passed into a trance and while in this condition his body was carried down into a deep vault far below the surface of the ground and laid in an immense sarcophagus, thus typifying death by the trance, and burial by being placed in the tomb underground.

If you think this matter over carefully, realizing that a great deal of this was known to the thinking and educated men of those times, whose knowledge was handed down by word of mouth age after age, you will see that many having this barely outlined in their minds, when the time came for them to write about the story of the Christ, it is not surprising that they embellished it with many of these details; indeed, what they knew or had heard, became so inextricably interwoven with history, that it was

difficult to disentangle one from the other. The Mysteries had disappeared from the minds of most men and in their place the beloved figure of Jesus the Teacher, the one whose body was worthy to be delivered up to the true Christ, who used it for three years, became the central figure of the Christian Church.

Who then is this true Christ of Whom we speak as inhabiting the body of Jesus? We are told that He was in all things a man like as we are, and it is true, but He was much more than that; He is the first of our humanity to attain to the level of Christhood, for Christhood is a stage in evolution, an office it might be called, and so He truly was the first born among many brethren, the very first fruits of them that slept, for He had done with sleep. He had passed through all the kingdoms of matter, mounting up grade by grade, until matter, as such, had fallen away from Him.

He was its Master, able to shape it to His own form or to disintegrate it, as He willed. When He wished to appear to His disciples after His supposed Resurrection, He simply clothed Himself in the matter of whatever plane He wished to appear to them, probably that of the astral, except on rare occasions such as when He wished to convince Thomas the doubter that

He truly was that beloved Master whom Thomas had supposed dead, and actually incorporated physical particles into His astral body, so that Thomas might touch Him and feel the print of the nails in His hands, or He gave Thomas astral sight for the time, and as on the astral plane we mould the matter to that which we desire, so Thomas saw what he expected to see and felt what he expected to feel; whichever it might be, Thomas was convinced. I have often thought when people scoff at spiritualism, that if they only read their Bible with a little more understanding, they would know that it is perfectly possible to see our dear ones who have passed over, for we also have bodies of subtler matter, the same as Christ had, and if we will, we can use them. What also, were Moses and Elias on the Mount, but great Initiates who were able to make their bodies visible to the disciples Peter, James and John?

Again, friends, there is still another aspect of the Christ, close and dear to our hearts—it is the Christ of the human spirit—the Christ who is to be born as a little child in the heart of each one of us; and that Christ is born and lives, is crucified, rises from the dead, ascends into heaven in every suffering and triumphant Son of Man. Every man is a potential Christ,

and just as we read the life story in the Gospels, so can that story be traced in every one of us. Let us see how this may be:

There is within each of us a Christ principle which in most is dormant but can be awakened; the awakening of that principle is the birth of the Christ within each man. Does not St. Paul say, "Christ in you the hope of glory"? because only the possession of that within you can ever bring the hope of glory. That Christ we must believe in also, for how can we mould ourselves to any ideal if the ideal does not lie deep within us? When that Christ principle is awakened, as it is beginning to be in some of you now, we realize and begin to live the true Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God who "Maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good and sends His rain on the just and on the unjust," and until we do realize that, Brotherhood is a mere name and nothing more. True belief must show forth in action. At the first great Initiation which we can all look forward to, the Christ is truly born in the disciple; not just a touch of the Christ consciousness for a moment, but a marvelous change in the man which shows him that he really is one with all that lives. This is called the second birth, born truly into the kingdom of heaven as a little child; and once the Christ is born he can never

perish for his life expands and grows in wisdom and spirituality until the time comes for his second Initiation, which in all our Christian Churches is signified by the Baptism of the child. Then his spiritual powers begin to unfold more strongly, for again to quote St. Paul, "He is born of the Spirit."

But the greater the influx of spiritual power, the stronger become the temptations, as the dark powers try ever to lure away him who sets his feet on the Path. He is tempted to use these new-born powers for his own gratification, that he may make swifter progress; but if he conquers these temptations, then he uses these powers for the benefit of mankind.

The third Initiation is portrayed to us as the transfiguration of Christ on the Mount, when one is permitted to meet those Higher Beings of Whom we can only faintly dream; Beings probably as high above the Masters as the Masters are above men. Can one wonder that one is transfigured when John speaks of it as the "Glory of the Only Begotten of the Father"?

The man now radiates love, not only the love of man to man, but the love of God to man. That love has now to be proved; is he willing to crucify the flesh in every way; is he willing to give up his nearest, so that it can no longer be said of him, "He that loveth father or mother

more than me is not worthy of me"? Here comes the supreme test, the renunciation of all, everything that would hold him back, even for a moment from his set purpose, the sacrifice of himself in order that he may be the better able to help others. This is the fourth Great Initiation.

He is ready—ready to face everything that may be asked of him, all selfishness is once and for all put on one side, ready to endure the misunderstandings of all his friends, the taunts and jeers of his foes; they have no longer power to hurt him, though until that moment came, of supreme self-renunciation, he has not quite understood the extent of what was required of him; but now nothing has power to hold him back; neither height nor depth, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. He gives himself fully, freely, never sparing himself in any way. showing out in every act of his life the compelling power within, until finally he is ready for his fifth Initiation, which makes him the Master triumphant, the Superman, the veritable link between God and man, showing out the at-one-ment with the Father, and proving that, in the same way He has been victorious over life and death, so may we follow in His footsteps that we too may all

become Saviors of men, all become first-fruits of them that sleep.

This, and much more, should the season of Christmas bring to our minds, prompting us anew to fresh resolves that the Christ Child shall be born in our hearts, and looking forward with joy to the coming of the great World-Teacher, the Lord Christ, who has promised in the ancient Scriptures that "Whenever there is decay of righteousness, then will I come again"; and surely, surely if ever He was needed, He is needed now.

